

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 IO-13 HA-05 EB-08 MCT-01 /088 W  
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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4175  
INFO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 0394

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2  
TAGS: PEPR, SHUM, AR, CI  
SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND BEAGLE CHANNEL DISPUTE  
WITH ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR

1. ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR TO US, JORGE AJA ESPIL,  
IS IN BUENOS AIRES ATTENDING FOREIGN OFFICE AMBASSADORIAL  
CONFERENCE ON BEAGLE CHANNEL DISPUTE. I INVITED  
HIM TO LUNCH JANUARY 17 AND HE TOLD ME THAT  
PRESIDENTS VIDELA AND PINOCHET WOULD MEET IN MENDOZA  
ON OR ABOUT JANUARY 19. AJA ESPIL IS TO SEE PRESIDENT  
VIDELA LATER TODAY AND SAID HE WOULD RECOMMEND  
THAT NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE BEYOND FEBRUARY 2  
IF A DECISION COULD NOT BE REACHED AT THE EARLIER  
MEETING. NOT ONLY WOULD A COOLING-OFF  
PERIOD BE USEFUL, BUT IT WOULD HAVE A GREAT IMPACT  
ON THE PRESIDENTS' CONSTITUENCIES IN THE IMPRESSION  
WERE GIVEN THAT CONTINUED EFFORTS WERE BEING MADE  
ON A BILATERAL BASIS TO RESOLVE THE DISPUTE.

2. AJA ESPIL STATED JUNTA MEMBER AND NAVY COMMANDER  
ADMIRAL MASSERA HAD DONE AN EXCELLENT JOB OF  
INFLAMING PASSIONS. THE AMBASSADOR FEELS  
STRONGLY THAT IF VIDELA AND PINOCHET SHOULD COME  
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AWAY FROM THEIR MEETING EMPTY-HANDED, THE TWO  
COUNTRIES MAY ACTUALLY BECOME EMBROILED IN SOME  
SORT OF SKIRMISH. HE HAD REACHED THIS CONCLUSION  
AS THE RESULT OF THE EXTREMELY HIGH EMOTIONS  
DISPLAYED ABOUT THE BEAGLE CHANNEL DISPUTE  
AMONG THE NAVY LEADERSHIP IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE.

3. HUMAN RIGHTS: THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE LUNCHEON WAS TO LET AJA ESPIL KNOW THAT THE GOA'S RECENT PERFORMANCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS HAS BEEN A DISTINCT DISAPPOINTMENT AND TRY TO GET HIM TO TAKE SOME POSITIVE ACTION. I TOLD HIM OF MY DISSATISFACTION WITH THE LACK OF PROGRESS BY THE GOA AND EMPHASIZED THAT IT WAS INDISPENSABLE THAT THE GOA MOVE PROMPTLY ON PRIORITY CASES; JACOBO TIMERMAN'S RELEASE, FOR INSTANCE, IS INDISPENSABLE. THE DEUTSCH CASE IS ALSO INEXPLICABLE. I LET HIM READ A COPY OF THE DEPARTMENT'S 011888 TRANSMITTING CONGRESSMAN WAXMAN'S LETTER. AJA ESPIL AGREED THAT THE GOA SHOULD DO MORE AND SAID HE WOULD RAISE THE ISSUES, INCLUDING THE SPECIFIC CASES, WITH VIDELA. HE STATED THAT VIDELA WAS UNABLE TO CONTROL HARD-LINE GENERALS SUAREZ MASON. MENENDEZ, AND SAINT JEAN WHO OPPOSE TIMERMAN'S RELEASE (THE STAFF HERE DOES NOT RECALL AJA ESPIL'S HAVING PREVIOUSLY TAKEN THE LINE THAT THESE GENERALS WERE BEYOND VIDELA'S CONTROL.) HE SUGGESTED THAT PERHAPS THE HARD-LINE GENERALS MIGHT BE INVITED TO VISIT US MILITARY INSTALLATIONS ON GROUNDS THAT THIS MIGHT CONVERT THEM TO A MORE POSITIVE HUMAN RIGHTS POSITION.

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4. AJA ESPIL Dplored the disappearances of the two French nuns and the mothers of the "DESAPARECIDOS". HE INDICATED THAT HIS INDEFINITE INFORMATION SUGGESTED THAT THE NAVY WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ABDUCTIONS, BUT THAT THE ARMY WAS TRYING TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THE MATTER. OFFICIALS IN THE FOREIGN OFFICE TOLD AJA ESPIL THAT THE NUMBER OF ACTUAL RELEASES FROM PRISON ON THE CHRISTMAS LIST WAS APPROXIMATELY 300.

5. COMMENT: HE APPEARED SINCERE IN HIS BELIEF THAT THE BEAGLE DISPUTE COULD ACTUALLY RESULT IN CONFLICT IF IT IS NOT PROMPTLY COMPROMISED. HIS POSITION ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IS NOT NEW. HIS PROPOSAL OF INVITATIONS TO HARD-LINE GENERALS MUST HAVE BEEN A MOMENTARY LAPSE OF JUDGMENT. THE FIGURE OF 300 RELEASES IS ALMOST IDENTICAL WITH ESTIMATES RECEIVED FROM OTHER INTERESTED SOURCES.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
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**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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